



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Protection of Torture Victims

As prepared for delivery by Frank Gaffney,
U.S. State Department, Office of the Legal Advisor,
to the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
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Mr. Moderator, since time allows, we have asked for the floor for a second time to reflect on this morning's remarks by Ole Esperson. We want to echo the emphasis that he and other speakers have placed on the special needs of the victims of torture. In this context, I'd like to recall the commitment that all participating States undertook at the Istanbul Summit, where we agreed to assist the victims of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and in this regard to cooperate with relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

There are an estimated 400,000 survivors of torture in the United States, most of whom came to the United States as refugees. The United States seeks to provide specialized assistance to these victims as well as to other victims abroad through three funds:

- First, the U.S. provides funding for torture treatment centers in the United States.
- Second, we provide support for foreign treatment centers through the U.S. Agency for International Development.
- Finally, we provide substantial assistance to the UN Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture.

As other speakers have suggested, torture treatment centers not only help repair the broken lives of torture survivors. They also help document the practice of torture and, in this way, contribute to the fight against torture.